

HIV/AIDS IN EUROPE AND EURASIA 2008

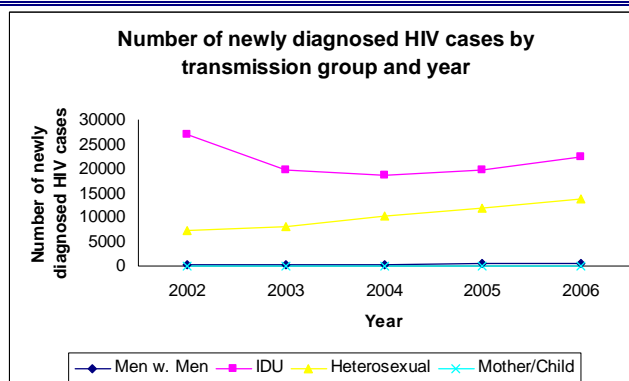
Overview: Eastern Europe and Eurasia¹ (E&E) is currently experiencing one of the fastest-growing HIV/AIDS epidemics in the world; **over 1.5 million people in the region are living with HIV, a 20-fold increase in less than a decade.** Unlike other regions of the world, HIV in E&E is predominantly transmitted through injecting drug use, which accounts for 62% of new HIV cases in the region.

USAID programming in the region primarily focuses on reaching high risk populations by providing assistance to local governments and organizations to improve access to effective and high-quality services. Programming includes prevention of sexual and biomedical transmission, care for those affected and infected including orphans and vulnerable children, treatment, and policy work to encourage high-level political commitment and to address stigma and discrimination. Assistance is also provided to support Global Fund applications and E&E USAID Programs are funded through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

HIV/AIDS Statistics

- Population with HIV/AIDS: 1,500,000
- Children with HIV/AIDS: 55,000
- Adult HIV prevalence: 0.9%
- New HIV infections: 150,000
- AIDS-related deaths: 55,000

(statistics) Source: HIV InSite, 2008 (data from 2007)
(graph) Source: EUROHIV, 2006



Important HIV/AIDS Issues in Europe and Eurasia

- In the E&E region, the Russian Federation and Ukraine make up almost 90% of all newly reported HIV cases and **Ukraine has the highest prevalence rate in Europe.**
- Approximately one-quarter of the world's total injecting drug users reside in E&E. Alarming, **heroin use is four times greater in E&E than the global average** (AVERT, 2008).
- **Sexual transmission of HIV is increasing** throughout the region, accounting for 41% of newly diagnosed cases of HIV in Russia and Ukraine in 2005 (EuroHIV, 2006a).
- **HIV is a youthful epidemic in E&E.** An average of one-third reported HIV positive infections occur among 15 to 24 year olds. In Russia, 15 to 24 year olds make up 80% of HIV cases (UNAIDS, 2006).
- **In Georgia, the median age of first injecting drug exposure is decreasing**, falling from 18.5 years old in 2002 to 15 years old in 2006. Injecting drug use accounts for 67% of all HIV infections in Georgia (Georgian National Institute of Drug Addiction with SHIP)

¹ Countries include Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Though several countries are now EU members and the Central Asian Region is now managed through USAID's Asia Bureau, the 28 countries are tracked for comparisons and trends.

Examples of USAID HIV/AIDS Programs

- The Healthy Russia 2020 program addresses HIV prevention and care among substance abusers by promoting modern concepts of counseling, treatment, case management and social support; training health care workers to provide pre- and post-test counseling for HIV/AIDS; and teaching HIV prevention among vulnerable youth. *Implementer: Johns Hopkins University*
- USAID is supporting interventions in Ukraine to reduce stigma and discrimination around HIV/AIDS. These interventions include advocacy for legal reforms that protect the rights of those affected by the disease, a communications campaign, and the establishment of an extensive network of peer educators who generate support and public acceptance for people living with HIV/AIDS. *Implementer: International Relief and Development, Inc. (IRD)*
- The Drug Abuse Prevention Program in Georgia empowers youth to identify risky behaviors and reject illicit drug use through a national, age-appropriate drug abuse prevention media campaign. *Implementer: IOCC*

Figure 2. An AIDS campaign in Ukraine educates young people on HIV/AIDS



USAID HIV/AIDS Success Stories

- Through USAID-supported programs in Georgia, use of shared injecting drug equipment was reported to decrease from 79% (2002) to below 43% (2005) and increased condom use among commercial sex workers from 86.7% (2002) to 94.4% (2005) at the program locations.
- In Crimea, Ukraine, USAID-funded programs worked to decrease discrimination towards HIV positive mothers by allowing equal access to hospital services, allowing families to visit HIV-positive women, and removal of physical barriers between HIV positive and negative pregnant women and new mothers.
- The mother-to-child HIV transmission rate has been cut in half in Ukraine due in part to USAID supported HIV/AIDS programs that directly provided HIV counseling and testing to over 500,000 pregnant women.

For more information on USAID supported HIV programs, please visit:

http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/health/